REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-26 are pending in this application, of which claim 1 has been amended. Claim 2 has been canceled. Claims 19-26 are withdrawn from consideration. No new claims have been added.

The claims stand rejected as follows:

1. Claims 1, 3-5 and 7 under 37 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,304,112 to Mrklas, et al. (hereinafter "**Mrklas, et al.**");
2. Claims 1, 8, 10-11 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) an anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,993,401 to Inbe, et al. (hereinafter "**Inbe, et al.**");
3. Claims 3-7 and 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over **Inbe, et al.** in view of U.S. Patent 5,792,047 to Coggins (hereinafter "**Coggins**"); and
4. Claims 2 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over **Inbe, et al.** in view of U.S. Patent 6,024,575 to Ulrich (hereinafter "**Ulrich**").

Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Mrklas, et al. discloses an integrated stress reduction system which detects the stress level of a subject and displays a light pattern reflecting the relationship between the subject's stress level and a target level. At the same time, the system provides relaxing visual, sound, tactile, environmental, and other effects to aid the subject in reducing his or her stress level to the target level. In one preferred embodiment, the intensity, type, and duration of the relaxing effects are controlled by a computer program in response to the measured stress level.

The stress detection module (SDM) 15 uses one or more of the following biological sensors: an expansion strap to measure breathing, a microphone to detect the heart beat, and electrode sensors to measure galvanometric skin resistance and brain wave activity. Higher breathing rates and heart rate are associated with higher levels of stress, while lower breathing rates and heart rates are associated with lower levels of stress. The subject's state of stress may be calculated using one or more of these measurements. The biological sensors may be attached to the subject chair 55 or may be separately attachable to the subject.

The Examiner has urged that SRS computer 23 performs the function of the control circuit 23 for controlling the massage operation based on the living body information detected by a living body information sensor, as recited in claim 1 of the instant application.

Applicants respectfully disagree.

As shown in Fig. 1A, the SRS computer 23 takes the input from the Stress Detection Module 15 and outputs the result in a form to be displayed to the operator by the Stress State Indicator module 17. The SRS computer 23 does not control the Physical Support and Massage system 9, which is instead controlled directly by the Operator Control Module 27. There is no control means in **Mrklas, et al.** which detects the stress level and controls the massage action based on the detected stress level, as in the present invention.

Inbe, et al. discloses a relaxation inducing device comprising a biological parameter detecting unit for detecting biological parameter of a user, stimulus loading unit for providing a stimulus to the user, relax-level determining unit for determining a relax level of the user by

comparing the biological parameter detecting unit with at least one relax-level threshold value, and a stimulus control unit for controlling an amount of the stimulus according to the relax level to induce the user into a relax state. In this device, since an optimum amount of stimulus is provided to the user on a real-time basis, it is possible to efficiently and smoothly induce the user into the relaxation state.

Coggins discloses a bio-feedback system to support the collection of a plurality of physiological parameter values of a subject being monitored. The physiological parameter values collected are processed to determine and present to the subject a continuously updated succession of presentation states.

Coggins has been cited for teaching the use of skin temperature measuring sensors 16c.

Ulrich discloses insertable insoles of flexible air-injected elastomer material with one or both said insoles containing a lithium-battery power supply (27), a microprocessor with an internal timer, an analog/digital converter, and an actuator (28), connected by at least one wire (29) to a plurality of electronic sensors (12) wrapped around the toes of the foot. The actuator vibrates a plurality of raised nodes (20) on the insole(s) with the speed and intensity of vibrations in either direct or inverse response to the level of stress experienced, as measured by physiological signals such as galvanic skin response.

The Examiner has admitted that **Inbe, et al.** fails to teach that the massage movement is adjusted to increase the activity of the autonomic nervous system in the "refreshment mode", but has cited **Ulrich** for teaching this feature, citing column 4 lines 13-16, which disclose that

"the microprocessor can be programmed to cause vibration in inverse relation to the degree of stress experienced."

Applicants respectfully disagree. None of the cited references recognizes or identifies that the distinction between the relaxation mode and the refreshment mode is based on the lowering or raising of the activity of the autonomic nervous system, as in the present invention. Although the other three references discuss various levels of relaxation based upon, for example, heart rate, "no combination of references teaches, mentions or suggests a massage movement adjusting means which switches between a "relaxation mode," defined by a relaxed, low level of autonomic nervous system activity and a "refreshment mode," defined by a high level of autonomic nervous system activity, as recited in claim 2 of the instant application.

According, claim 2 has been canceled and its limitations added to claim 1.

Thus, the 35 USC §102(b), §102(e) and §103(a) rejections should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 1 and 3-26, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures: Petition for Extension of Time

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